

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1-16. (canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) A method for producing hydroxylated and/or acetylated steroids, comprising the steps according to which:

- yeast cells are cultured on a medium comprising at least one precursor of such hydroxylated and/or acetylated steroids, and then

- the hydroxylated and/or acetylated steroids are isolated from the medium after bioconversion,

wherein said precursor is ~~DHEA~~ dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) or pregnenolone;

wherein said yeast cells are ~~of the genus~~ *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* cells;

wherein said yeast cells are transformed with the rat *Cyp7b* gene so as to express the 7 $\alpha$  hydroxylase enzymatic activity encoded by said rat *Cyp7b* gene which catalyzes 7 $\alpha$  hydroxylation of pregnenolone and DHEA;

wherein said yeast cells are further modified so as to lack an acetyl coenzyme A-pregnenolone acetyltransferase (APAT) activity when compared to wild type yeast cells; and

wherein the modification of the yeast cells resulting in a lack of acetyl coenzyme A-pregnenolone acetyltransferase (APAT) activity is caused by the inactivation of the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* atf2 gene

18-19. (canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein said precursor can be hydroxylated at position 7.

21-24. (canceled)

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein said yeast cells also produce a protein having dehydrogenase activity.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, wherein said dehydrogenase activity is a  $17\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity which catalyzes the production of a steroid precursor hydroxylated at position 17.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein said  $17\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity is encoded by the *yil124w* gene.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the yeast cells further lack a  $17\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity when compared to wild type yeast cells.

29. (Canceled)

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the rat *Cyp7b* gene is under the control of a yeast promoter chosen from the group consisting of CYC1, TEF1 and TDH3.

31. (Withdrawn) A yeast strain having zero 17-dehydrogenase activity by inactivation of the *yil124w* gene.

32. (Currently Amended) A saccharomyces yeast strain transformed with the rat *Cyp7b* gene so as to express the 7 $\alpha$  hydroxylase enzymatic activity encoded by said rat *Cyp7b* gene, wherein said yeast strain is further modified so as to lack an acetyl coenzyme A-pregnenolone acetyltransferase (APAT) activity when compared to wild type yeast cells;

wherein the modification of the yeast cells resulting in a lack of acetyl coenzyme A-pregnenolone acetyltransferase (APAT) activity is caused by the inactivation of the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* *atf2* gene; and

wherein the yeast cells are *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* cells

33. (Withdrawn) A method preparing a medicinal product for the treatment of diseases of the central nervous system comprising the step of preparing a steroid by the method of claim 17.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein said 17 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity is that encoded by the *yil124w* gene.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34, wherein the lack of a 17 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity results from inactivation of the *yil124w* gene encoding said 17 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity.

36. (Canceled)